

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Sugiyama et al. (JP 2003-189181) (hereinafter "Sugiyama").

Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sugiyama in view of Mizuno (JP 8-330560) (hereinafter "Mizuno").

Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sugiyama in view of Kitamura et al. (JP 4-341062) (hereinafter "Kitamura").

Claims 7 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as set forth in the Office Action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled claims 1-6 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have amended independent claims 7 and 8 of the instant application to be rewritten in independent form and also to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application and/or to improve the form of the claims. Accordingly, claims 7 and 8 remain currently pending and under consideration.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Applicants have amended independent claims 7 and 8 of the instant application to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application and/or to improve the form of the claims in response to the Examiner's comments at page 2 of the Office Action. For example, references to "adding" and "addition" have been removed from these claims. Applicants respectfully submit that all of the currently pending claims, as amended, fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Sugiyama. Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sugiyama in view of Mizuno. Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sugiyama in view of Kitamura. Applicants have canceled claims 1-6 without prejudice or disclaimer, rendering these rejections moot. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended independent claims 7 and 8 of the instant application to be rewritten in independent form and also to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application and/or to improve the form of the claims. The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 7 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as set forth in the Office Action and to include all of

the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as the issues regarding 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph have now been addressed and claims 7 and 8 have each been rewritten in independent form, as discussed previously, claims 7 and 8 are now in condition for allowance.

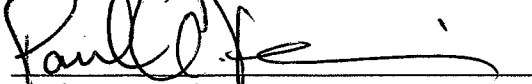
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response; the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

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